

BCOS Strategic Planning Session

May 11, 2010

Facilitator: Michelle Cole

Staff: Danise Alano, Jacqui Bauer, Adam Wason

BCOS members: Bill Brown, Melissa Clark, Andy Davis, George Huntington, Matt Laherty, Ted Mendoza, David Parkhurst, Dave Rollo (ex-officio), Paul Schneller, Cynthia Schultz, Toby Strout, Maggie Sullivan, Heidi Russell Wagner (ex-officio)

Introductions

Began with discussion of why people are involve in BCOS—asked each member to write 5 reasons for their participation to develop an “affinity diagram.”

Reasons for participating:

Help Bloomington become more sust/example of sust

Common cause to drive pos change

Hep inf positive behavior change

Business devt

Network w/local

Jobs

Hunger

Peak food

Local food

Local products

Meet needs locally

More citizen participation

Sust lifestyle choices

Reach lowest econ demographic

Break through barrier of ignorance

Moving fwd as an aligned community

Est benchmarks

Concerned about ecol sust

Commitment to living responsibly wrt health of envt

Community resilience

Peak oil/climate change

Concern about credit economy

Green building/housing

Focus efforts of BCOS—big picture to local

Economic vitality—including everyone

Leaving things better than I found them

Low impact development

Create models for sust living

Water conservation

Prevent overshoot/die-off
Community ed on intrinsic value of NR
Infrast for sust living
Realistic assessment of sust of local systems
Recognize limits and increase comm. Awareness of limits
Transition ot steady state economy
Coord bt comm. Groups
Pool resources to improve campus/commy issues
To get to know community

Mission statement taken from BCOS creation ordinance: The mission of BCOS is to promote the sustainable socio-environmental-economic well-being of Bloomington and all its inhabitants while taking precautions not to compromise the quality of life of future generations.

Question was raised whether the ordinance gives the commission enough power to accomplish the many goals that listed above.

Also some concern that the requirements to complete the STAR report each year has been a challenge—this year planning to submit an abridged version this year.

BCOS charged with advising various govt agencies/departments/commissions, but the ordinances authorizing those bodies don't reflect that they need to listen to BCOS.

Mission statement from ordinance is broad (perhaps too broad); also is not “aspirational,” which some feel is necessary for the group to identify priorities. Aspirational goals might include a statement of global limits, a desire for self-reliance and balance.

Jacqui: new sustainability coordinator position needs lots of support and representation in the community in order to have a meaningful impact. Asked for the group to identify priorities.

BCOS values:

- We recognize global and local limits; our current paradigm is not sustainable
- Urgency of changing our paradigm and behavior
- Striving for community self-reliance and resilience
- Energy independence
- Balanced interdependence within the community and the region
- Relocalize goods and services (or re-regionalizing)
- Increased inclusion and equity
- Support for the universal declaration of human rights
- Balancing individual and community needs and interests

- Increased frugality and reciprocity; collaboration and cooperation
- Intergenerational equity
- Diversity (respecting and allowing for differences)
- Recognizing the intrinsic value of nature
- Conservation, regeneration, and restoration
- Knowledge sharing and capacity building
- Knowledge-based action/credible information to make decisions
- Resource sharing
- Learning to live w/in current solar income (natural energy flows) and w/in the regenerative carrying capacity of the planet
- Thrive within our means
- It doesn't have to suck

Vision statement should be inspirational, aspirational, perspirational, and convey a sense of urgency.

Action item identification

Red tags: willing to lead (recommend no more than one)

Yellow tags: willing to lend assistance if someone else leads (recommend no more than two)

Green/blue tags: willing to advocate or provide other minor assistance (recommend no more than 3-4)

Economy/employment

- Local currency
- Public/private (could be cooperative) partnership to develop a manufacturing concern that will employ lower-skilled individuals at a living wage and will not negatively impact the environment
- Create/promote green jobs
- Localize economy/support Local First Indiana
- Buy local program education
- Educate for necessity of steady-state economy
- Pedestrian-only Kirkwood and/or downtown
- Establish micro-loans for sustainable local businesses
- Encourage/develop a full-loop economy that will support cradle-to-cradle
- Find ways to attract/create green business (or inform BCOS in more detail about what economic development is already doing)
- No tax waivers/tax relief for employers w/o real and monitored living wage job creation
- Research and issue statement on focus areas for "green" jobs in Blgtn/Monroe County area (then bring programs here)

Food

- Participate/model after Jamie Oliver's Food Revolution campaign
- Support/coordinate with local growers guild on farm incubator, food distribution infrastructure
- Incentivize value-added food production facility; distribution also
 - Coordinate with Bloomington Kitchen Incubator
- Southside or Westside farmers' market
- Identify local govt resources to enhance local food production, both commercial and residential
- Permaculture demonstration projects
- Provide demonstration sites so folks can learn/see how tend gardens—so they don't become an eye sore and discourage others to garden as well
- We need to know how many and type of calories grown near Bloomington
- Many more public gardens; orchards in parks
- Encourage urban farming in city and on IU campus
- Encourage more private, community and university gardens
- Allow animals w/in city limits (chickens and sheep)
- Publicize benefits of vegetarian diet
- Food education—teach people to cook local foods
- Education on consumption of local food
- Teach canning, teach storage
- Home food storage
- More urban gardening programs; Establish "gardening 101" programs

Leaders

- Heidi: head up and dev local energy generation and distribution—move away from coal
- Melissa: water
- Dave: Off-grid water production (will tie to energy)
- Matt: Food
- Maggie: promote/create green jobs, organize a sust demonstration
- Bill: provide ed conferences symposia on how to thrive w/in our means; ed contractors on green building and how it benefits their bottom line
- Cynthia: streamline STAR
- Toby: advocate for develop language within city depts.?
- Paul: advocate for city depts. to listen to sustainability concerns?
- Ted: Create centralized web resource for local resources and events

Focus topics (based on member votes):

Food

Water

Energy

Green building and water initiatives provide a model for the role that the commission could play—info gathering, ordinance/memo drafting, consensus on commission position, advising/advocating to relevant agencies.

Jacqui will type up where priorities were identified and share with the commission